

In January of 2006, the Commission stood down and the GMC was created by another Executive Order to support the military in the State of Kansas. The GMC's membership consists of 25 individuals from the communities in which the state's four major installations are located, state legislators, the Adjutant General and representatives of the Kansas Congressional Delegation.

We thank you for your leadership on the issue of critical importance to our nation's military and the military installations in the State of Kansas.

Sincerely,

JOHN E. MOORE,

Chair, Governor's Military Council.

Mr. ROBERTS. This bipartisan support shows how important these funds are to our military. So underfunding BRAC MILCON by \$3 billion, or even \$1, sends a terrible message to our troops. It tears to shreds the bipartisan support involved with the BRAC process.

Isn't it ironic, I would say to the Senator from Texas, and to you, Mr. President, and to my colleagues, that at a time when many of our colleagues in the House and Senate are saying, bring the troops home now, and everybody wishes we could, these same colleagues in the House—again, either through ignorance or incompetence or politics—apparently do not think it is necessary to provide the facilities that will support these troops and their families.

There is no other option, I say to the Senator from Texas and to my colleagues. I urge the majority leader to support our troops and their families by allowing a vote on this amendment, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I thank the Senator from Texas for yielding me this time for these many questions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Kansas for pointing out some of the real problems delaying this BRAC funding are going to bring. I hope the distinguished majority leader and the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee will find a way we can move the BRAC military construction forward. It is essential that we do this, and we can do it. We have a week in which we can work out any details that need to be worked out. I think it is very important that we do what is right for our country. We have time to do it. There is no reason not to do it, and we can do it in a fiscally responsible way.

What has been suggested by the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee is that we will handle this in a supplemental, that we will put \$3 billion into the supplemental. But, of course, that means we will be spending \$3 billion outside of the budget and added to the deficit, which is not necessary. We can fix this with a very small cut across the board of all of the projects in the bill, except for Defense, Homeland Security, Veterans. I think anyone can put together a program that has less than a 1-percent cut, and I think most people would say our pri-

orities should be the active-duty military, that we should have the ability to put the housing and the childcare centers and the training facilities in place that would accommodate the needs of the military. My goodness, look what our military people are doing for us and for our country.

The idea that we wouldn't give them what they need to do the job, and when they come home, to have a place to stay and live and do their training so they can be the very best, would be unthinkable. It would be unthinkable. So I do hope we can go forward. I don't remember ever taking up an Omnibus appropriations bill with no amendments in order. I hope it will be possible that we will be able to take it up in the normal process—or maybe not even the normal process. We would settle for not normal, but for some number of amendments.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I would propound a unanimous consent request. I ask unanimous consent that during the period of morning business, Senators be permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and that the following Senators be recognized in this order: Senators HUTCHISON, INHOFE, CHAMBLISS, KENNEDY, and LEAHY; and following that, Senator SHELBY be recognized for up to 45 minutes; and that after this sequence, the sides alternate where appropriate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, this is, as I am sure the Senator from Texas knows, somewhat unusual, and not the way this is normally done. Normally we would alternate from side to side. I have actually discussed this with some of the Senators on her side. However, in the interests of at least having some idea of where we are going to go so we won't have to do the procedural fix of having Senators stand up and propound speeches that are put in the form of a question as we have been seeing here for some time, I will not object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The unanimous consent request is granted.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, my remarks will not last 10 minutes, and I hope the Senator from Georgia will be able to have his time in turn, because he has been waiting for quite a long time.

ACCOMMODATING THE NEEDS OF THE MILITARY

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, what we are asking with the amendment I have tried to put forward but which was ruled out of order is to simply restore the \$3.1 billion that was cut from the Base Closing Commission military construction. We cut—not we, but the bill that is on the floor that we are not able to amend—\$3.1 billion out

of the Base Closing Commission military construction funding. Our amendment, the Hutchison-Inhofe amendment, has 27 cosponsors. That is almost one-third of the Senate, and there are many who said they would like to sponsor the amendment but in deference to their leadership did not feel they could, because so many States have major projects in this BRAC military construction funding.

These are not projects that any Member of Congress put in this bill or in the bill that passed the House and Senate. These are the Department of Defense projects, for them to be able to meet the congressionally mandated deadline of 2011 for finishing the BRAC process. So they are projects that were selected in order of priority by the Department of Defense. There is not one earmark, not one congressional add in the military construction budget that we are trying to restore. We are trying to restore the budget we have already passed so the Department of Defense can meet the deadline we have set.

I think this amendment should be in order. It is my great hope that the distinguished leader and the distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee will allow it to go forward with no further delay, because there is going to be a delay if we wait until the supplemental. Not only will the \$3 billion be outside of the scope of the budget and add \$3 billion more to the deficit, but it will, in fact, delay the building projects for yet another 2 months, which will be a whole half year that the Department of Defense will be strapped for the funds to do what it needs to do to have its synchronized movement of troops be able to accomplish what they are trying to accomplish.

I hope we will have a reconsideration. I hope the House will work with us. We have a whole week to do it. We have done things in 24 hours that were harder than this, and I believe that delaying the return of 12,000 troops to facilities they deserve to have is not a good bargain. So I am very hopeful we will eventually have true bipartisanship in the Senate, true bipartisanship in the Appropriations Committee, which has been the tradition in the Senate for all these years. I ask that the majority in leadership help work with us to accommodate the needs of the military.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Oklahoma is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, let me inquire as to how much time is left open from the 10 minutes of the Senator of Texas?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 5 minutes 40 seconds.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that those 5 minutes be divided between myself and Senator CHAMBLISS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.